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Appln. No. : 10/025,403
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Amendments to the Specification:

Please add the following paragraph immediately following page 1, line 24:

The food substrate coating industry has for some time attempted to produce coatings for foods such as meat and vegetables, particularly potatoes, in the form of a substantially clear coat. Such "clear coats" are important because of their ability to maintain the original food substrate's natural appearance to the final consumer, while imparting desired characteristics to the reconstituted product, for example increased surface crispness. Further, such coatings increase the holding time or post-preparation time at which the product can be maintained at preferred post-preparation characteristics prior to consumption by a final consumer. To this end, food coatings have been developed previously that were essentially clear in nature and applied to potato strips of a type that were then deep fried (parfried) and frozen for storage prior to finish cooking and consumption. However, developing a substantially clear coat for potato substrates which increases and maintains the crispness of the final cooked product, over an extended period of time without loss of improved visual appearance characteristics and without the formation of reticulation crystallization, has posed a significant difficulty for formulators within the food coating industry.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 5, line 1 as follows:

The batter/slurry coating may consist of, but is not limited to, essentially any desired combination of water plus potato, wheat, corn, or other starches (which may be starch per se or flour), plus spices, coloring, leavening, salt, *etc.* Examples of particular coatings used on sliced potatoes which yield desirable results in this invention are set forth in a commonly-owned co-pending Application Nos. 60/180,666 and 60/234,153 (unofficial), which are incorporated herein by reference as fully as though set forth verbatim herein. For example, a coating composition could contain 15% rice flour having a particle size of from about 100 mesh or greater, 15% rice starch having a particle size of from about 200 mesh or greater, 15% rice flour having a particle size of from about 100 mesh or less, 15% of a rice starch

having a particle size of 200 mesh or less, 15% dextrin, 15% potato starch, and 10% corn starch, which would achieve the desired objectives of the present invention.

Through use of rice flour having a particle size of greater than 100 mesh or rice starch having a particle size of greater than 200 mesh, concentrations of rice flour greater than 10% or rice starch greater than 10% may be utilized in coating compositions with minimal or no production of reticulation upon coated food substrates after final product reconstitution, even when frozen very quickly and at very low temperatures.

It has also been discovered that a substantial improvement over prior art coatings in crispness, holding time, tooth compaction, cost, and reconstitution characteristics for deep fat fryers, gradient heat ovens and microwave ovens without detracting from the appearance and flavor characteristics desirable to final consumers can be accomplished with a coating composition comprising a combination of both rice flour and a dextrin from the family of dextrins including corn dextrin, tapioca dextrin and potato dextrin on a comparatively high level. In particular, the rice flour component of the rice flour/dextrin combination comprises at least 25%, preferably about 27-28%, and most preferably up to 30% of the total weight of the combination of the composition of the present invention. The dextrin component of the rice flour/dextrin combination comprises at least about 20% of the total weight of this combination in the composition of the present invention, and preferably about 25% to 35%. For example, a clear coat composition used on sliced potatoes which yields desirable results in this invention is set forth in Table 1.

Table 1

Ingredients	%
Rice flour	25-30
Dextrin	25-35
Modified ungelatinized low amylose content potato starch	35-50
Corn starch	1-20
Leavening agent	> 1
Sugar component	> 1
Salt	> 1
Stabilizing agent	> 0.1

After being so coated, the product is parfried and frozen for storage and shipment.